



# Transportation Friday

An electronic newsletter concerning regional transportation issues

Friday, October 14<sup>th</sup> 2016

Volume 20, Number 2

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ALDOT wants your opinion on the Bike / Ped element of the I-10 Mobile River Bridge Project on Thursday, October 27<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the James M. Seals Jr. Community Center located at 540 Texas Street in Mobile (see *Mobile MPO Updates and In The News*). There is an *Interim Approval* on Bike Boxes, and \$\$\$ for driverless cars (see *Legislative Updates*). This week's *Just For Fun* will make you want some peanuts and Cracker Jacks. Have a great weekend!

**Have a great weekend! And check out [ALGO Traffic](#) before you travel!**

Anthony Johnson, Monica Williamson, Tom Piper, and Kevin Harrison, PTP

[www.mobilempo.org](http://www.mobilempo.org)  check us out on FACEBOOK

## Mobile MPO Updates

### BIKE PED of the I-10 Mobile River Bridge Project Workshop

The Alabama Department of Transportation has requested that the public and members of the Mobile MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) attend a workshop to solicit input on the location of the bicycle and pedestrian river crossing that will be included as part of the Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project. The workshop will be held on Thursday, October 27<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the James M. Seals Jr. Community Center located at 540 Texas Street in Mobile. We hope to see you there

### End of the Fiscal Year

We just wrapped up Fiscal Year 2016, and the Mobile MPO had four projects totaling over **\$8.6 Million** authorized to be spent in FY 2016 out of the STP Attributable Funds. Considering we can program \$8.9 Million per year, I would say we are doing pretty good. Those four projects are:

- CR-372 (SCHILLINGER RD) ADD LANES FROM SR-42 (US-98) TO SR-217 (LOTT RD), UT, \$243,946
- CR-372 (SCHILLINGER RD) ADD LANES FROM SR-42 (US-98) TO SR-217 (LOTT RD), CN \$2,440,547
- CR-372 (SCHILLINGER RD) ADD LANES FROM SR-42 (US-98) TO SR-217 (LOTT RD), CN, \$5,105,061
- CR-656 (ZEIGLER BLVD) ADD LANES FROM CR-372 (SCHILLINGER RD) TO CR-429 (CODY RD),RW, \$835,000

The MPO met 4 times in FY 2016 approving federal spending in the Mobile Urbanized Area with funds spent at the State's discretion, from: Interstate Maintenance Funds, Surface Transportation Funds, National Highway Funds, High Priority Funding, Bridge Funds and Transportation Alternative Program Funding. The total amount approved by the Mobile MPO to be included in the 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) was **\$56,781,580**.

Of those funding categories above, there were 37 projects that were already in the TIP that were authorized to be spent in FY 2016 In the Mobile Urbanized Area totaling **\$50,268,574**.

### FTA 5310 FUNDING

The SARPC Transportation Planning Department has managed to successfully award over **\$875,000** worth of projects to the Mobile Urbanized area with the FTA 5310 program, to include funding for the following:

- MARC; Capital; 4 buses; Cost \$204,858 (\$163,886 Federal; \$40,972 Local)
- City of Prichard; Capital; 1 bus; Cost \$54,000 (\$43,200 Federal; \$10,800 Local)
- City of Saraland; Capital; 1 bus; Cost \$54,000 (\$43,200 Federal; \$10,800 Local)
- Goodwill Easter Seals; Capital; 1 bus; Cost \$54,000 (\$43,200 Federal; \$10,800 Local)
- City of Satsuma; Capital; GPS System; Cost \$31,000 (\$24,800 Federal; \$6,200 Local)
- MARC; Operating; Cost; \$376,996 (\$188,498 Federal; \$188,498 Local)
- Independent Living Center; Operating; Cost \$44,940 (\$22,470 Federal; \$22,470 Local)
- Mobile Bay Transportation; Operating; Cost \$19,960 (\$9,980 Federal; \$9,980 Local)
- SARPC; Administration Cost \$36,015 (\$36,015 Federal)

### TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP) FUNDING

#### TAP Funding Open Discussion

On September 27<sup>th</sup> there was an open discussion with the FHWA concerning the Mobile Urban Area Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding. The group talked about the FHWA Certification Recommendation to have a multi-year scheduling of TAP projects. What came out of the meeting, was that there was an agreement to have a two year award for a call for projects that will have a June, 2017 deadline. This call for projects will be for FY 2017 and FY 2018. It will give us the ability to move a project up if another project has fallen behind. There will be no extensions for the Preliminary Engineering to be completed within the two year time frame. Also, the group talked about the criteria that ranks the projects and that a local government can apply for more than one project, but only be funded one per year with the Mobile Urbanized Area TAP (this does not apply to ALDOT TAP). The amount of points given to a project that has multiple funding sources (donated) was also discussed to be decreased.

These modifications to the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) process, will be vetted back to the group prior to TCC/CAC comment and MPO approval. We will keep you posted.

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### **ADA TRANSITION PLANS**

As part of ALDOT Certification Review, FHWA noted a deficiency of ADA Transition Plans for Public ROW among Urban Areas. Since that time, all Urban Areas in the State have, or should have, completed ADA Transition Plans for Public ROW for all local governments over 50 employees. There are fewer requirements for those local governments that have less than 50 employees. Some of our rural local governments have recently adopted ADA Plans as well. These plans are a requirement of the ADA Act of 1990, and all local governments were supposed to have had an ADA Transition Plan starting in 1993. Here is [a primer for an ADA Transition Plan](#). A lot can happen in 25 years, change of staff, change of administration, and some local governments may have had a Plan, and it just needs to be updated.

For all ADA Transition Plans for Public ROW for the local Governments of the Mobile Urbanized area, please see [HERE](#). If you have any questions, please call Kevin Harrison.

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### **MPO Safety Performance Measures Fact Sheet**

FHWA recently announced the availability of four new resources online to help states and other stakeholders implement the Safety Performance Management Measures Final Rule. The resources include a safety performance targets timeline and a list of data resources and training support. In addition, the [MPO Safety Performance Measures Fact Sheet](#) summarizes the requirements for MPOs and compares the different responsibilities with state DOTs.

## **South Alabama RPO Updates**

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SARPC's RPO Program is finalizing the list of the current transportation projects and safety needs for the RPO area. This list is broken down by County and by Category (roadways, bridges, bike/ped, and transit). If there is anything you would like to add or delete or if there is a project listed that has been completed please let us know.

This list is an amendment to the RPO Transportation Plan and list of safety needs that we update each September. This comprehensive list of projects will be submitted to the Alabama Department of Transportation as a list of prioritized transportation needs for the rural areas of our region.

Further information is available on our [website](#).

## **Projects Within Region Let September 30th, 2016**

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### **Mobile County**

- For constructing the I-10 Eastbound Water Street On-Ramp Closure and Roadway Improvements (Minor Widening) at the Canal Street, Claiborne Street, and Texas Street Interchanges in Mobile. Length 1.242 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$1,121,759 to \$1,371,039.
- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, and Traffic Stripe on SR-16 (US-90) from west of the intersection of Pine Hill Drive (MP 25.250) to the intersection of SR-163 (MP 25.869) in Mobile. Length 0.619 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$319,672 to \$390,710 .

### **Baldwin County**

- For constructing the Planing, Resurfacing, Traffic Stripe, and Culvert Replacement on SR-225 from the junction of CR-138 (Hurricane Road) to the junction of SR-59 in Stockton. Length 11.546 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$2,027,543 to \$2,478,108 .
- For constructing the Adaptive Signal Installations along SR-42 (US-98) at various locations as indicated in the plans. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$2,269,431 to \$2,773,749
- For constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on Scenic Route 98 from the junction of CR-1 to the junction of Nelson Drive in Fairhope. Length 6.581 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$861,388 to \$1,052,808 .

### **Escambia County**

- For constructing the Resurfacing and Traffic Stripe on SR-21 from the Florida State Line to the pavement joint at MP 0.968 in Atmore. Length 0.968 mi. The Bracket Estimate on this project is from \$349,579 to \$427,263 .

[What's Under Construction?](#)

[Project Status](#)

## **Legislative Updates**

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### **USSOA Rule Implementation**

The purpose of the State Safety Oversight (SSO) program is to oversee safety of rail transit systems; it is administered by eligible states with rail transit systems in their jurisdiction. In April 2016, a final State Safety Oversight Agency (SSOA) rule took effect and is designed

to help prevent and mitigate accidents and incidents on rail transit systems. U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx recently sent [letters](#) to governments in each of the 29 affected states and territories encouraging them to provide the resources needed to deliver a higher level of safety and to comply with the rule. Without a fully established and certified SSOA by April 2019, FTA is prohibited from funding any state transit activity. You can find your State Safety Oversight contact on [FTA's website](#) to help ensure governors and legislatures are informed on the issue.

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## Feds award \$65M for advanced technology, driverless cars

By [Melanie Zanona](#) - 10/13/16 09:24 AM EDT

Thursday's announcement comes as the administration continues its push to bring automated vehicles to U.S. roads in an effort to improve safety, enhance mobility, and reduce traffic and fuel use. The DOT issued its first-ever federal guidelines for driverless cars and is expected to issue a rule by the end of this year requiring all new cars to have vehicle-to-vehicle communication. "From automated vehicles to connected infrastructure to data analytics, technology is transforming how we move around our country, and some of the most exciting innovation is happening at the local level," Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx said in a statement.

"These grants will enable cities and rural communities to harness new technologies to tackle hard problems like reducing congestion, connecting people to mass transit, and enhancing safety."

The grants are being provided through two different DOT initiatives. The "advanced transportation and congestion management technologies deployment" program doles out grants designed to help communities improve mobility and access to opportunity through advanced technology, while the "mobility on demand" sandbox program supports transit agencies using new mobility tools like smartphone apps and ride-sharing services. Some of the grants include \$11 million for Pittsburgh to install smart traffic-signal technology along major travel corridors; \$6 million for Denver to use connected vehicles to alleviate congestion; and \$1.2 million for the Dallas Area Rapid Transit to integrate ride-sharing services into its ticketing app.

Research on Bicycle Boxes: Agencies around the country have shown significant interest in intersection bicycle boxes, with over 25 experiments approved under the 2009 Edition of the MUTCD for a variety of State, County, and local government agencies including the Minnesota Department of Transportation; the District of Columbia Department of Transportation; and the cities of Austin, TX; Columbus, OH; Madison, WI; Missoula, MT; and Portland, OR.

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## MUTCD – Interim Approval for Optional Use of an Intersection Bicycle Box (IA-18)

With an increasing number of bicycle lanes marked on the curb side of streets, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has been requested to provide traffic control devices to facilitate bicyclists positioned to the right side of general-use travel lanes to enter the center of the general-use lanes at the approach to a signalized intersection. The intersection bicycle box is a designated area on the approach to a signalized intersection, between an advance stop line and the intersection stop line, intended to provide bicycles a space in which to wait in front of stopped motor vehicles during the red signal phase so that they are more visible to motorists at the start of the green signal phase. Positioning bicyclists in the center of the appropriate lane allows them to turn from a location where they are more visible to surrounding traffic, can increase the visibility of stopped bicycle traffic at an intersection, can reduce conflicts between bicycles and motor vehicles, can help mitigate intersection right-turn ("right-hook") conflicts, and can help group bicycles together to clear intersections more quickly.

The intersection bicycle box described in this Interim Approval memorandum is a new traffic control device and has been used in the United States only on an experimental basis through the MUTCD official experimentation process, which is described in Section IA.10.

Research on Bicycle Boxes: Agencies around the country have shown significant interest in intersection bicycle boxes, with over 25 experiments approved under the 2009 Edition of the MUTCD for a variety of State, County, and local government agencies including the Minnesota Department of Transportation; the District of Columbia Department of Transportation; and the cities of Austin, TX; Columbus, OH; Madison, WI; Missoula, MT; and Portland, OR.

These experiments have used a relatively consistent design of a bicycle box that includes the following elements:

- An advance stop line placed at least 10 feet in advance of the pedestrian crosswalk or the intersection stop line;
- A bicycle symbol pavement marking within the space beyond the advance stop line to indicate that bicyclists may wait in this area;
- At least a short length of bicycle lane approaching the bicycle box provided as a clear and predictable path for bicyclists to enter the box;
- Prohibition of turns on red if they would normally be allowed from the lane where the bicycle box is installed; and
- Countdown pedestrian signals provided across the approach on which the bicycle box is located if the bicycle box is installed across more than one lane of a signalized approach.

FHWA Evaluation of Results: The Office of Transportation Operations has reviewed the available data and considers the experimental bicycle box to be satisfactorily successful for the applications that were tested. Positive operational effects have been documented in the experiments after the installation of bicycle boxes, including:

- Reductions in the number of conflicts between bicyclists and turning drivers at the study intersections;
- Reductions in the number of avoidance maneuvers by both bicyclists and motorists;
- Reductions in the number of bicycles and motor vehicles encroaching into pedestrian crosswalks when stopped at an intersection;
- Road-user surveys and observations in multiple experiments that showed that motorists and bicyclists understood the purpose and proper usage of the bicycle box.

The design of the intersection bicycle box is not proprietary and can be used by any jurisdiction that requests and obtains Interim Approval from the FHWA to use bicycle boxes in accordance with Paragraphs 14 through 22 of Section IA.10 of the MUTCD. The FHWA believes that the intersection bicycle box as detailed in this memorandum has a low risk of safety or operational concerns.

This Interim Approval does not create a new mandate compelling the use of intersection bicycle boxes, but will allow agencies to install intersection bicycle boxes, pending official rulemaking revising the MUTCD, to facilitate more efficient operations at intersections. Interim Approval of a provisional device typically results in its inclusion in a future Notice of Proposed Amendments to revise the MUTCD. However, this Interim Approval does not guarantee adoption of the provisional device, either in whole or in part, in any future rulemaking that revises the MUTCD.





**Administrators' Beyond Traffic 2016 Roundtable**  
**THE Freight Economy**

***The Honorable Anthony Foxx***  
***U.S. Transportation Secretary***

***Invites you to join him for a***  
***“Virtual Freight Economy Roundtable”***  
***as part of our***  
***USDOT 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Event***

***Featuring:***

Gregory G. Nadeau Federal Highway Administrator	Sarah Feinberg, Federal Railroad Administrator
Daphne Jefferson Federal Motor Carrier Safety Deputy Administrator	Paul N. Jaenichen, Sr. Maritime Administrator

***Thursday, October 13, 2016, 2:00 - 4:30 pm, ET***

USDOT modal leaders traveled the country holding 24 Freight Economy Roundtables to spark conversations with business and government leaders.

You are invited to participate in this capstone event to hear some of what we heard around the country and to share your ideas, insights and experiences to improve freight movement nationally.

## Funding Opportunities

### **ALDOT TAP FUNDING (deadline December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016)**

The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) is soliciting applications for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) for FY 2017.

The TAP application and instructions are located on the ALDOT website at:

[http://www.dot.state.al.us/moweb/specialprograms\\_section.htm](http://www.dot.state.al.us/moweb/specialprograms_section.htm)

The TAP application is available on this page and on page two (2) of the instructional information is a listing of eligible improvement projects for TAP funding. The deadline for submission of FY 2017 TAP applications including support documentation is Friday, December 16, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.

Some major application requirements of the TAP are:

1. Only cities, towns and county commissions can apply for funding;
2. Due to limited funding, there is a \$400,000 cap on the amount of federal funds that a sponsor can apply for;
3. Only one application can be submitted by an eligible sponsor due to limited funding;
4. The funding ratio for TAP projects is 80% federal funds and 20% sponsor funds. The sponsor is responsible for the cost of required preliminary engineering;
5. Public involvement is optional;
6. Fifty (50) percent of the TAP funds are sub-allocated to the MPO's by population
  1. and fifty (50) percent is distributed to any area of the state by ALDOT ;
7. All TAP projects are selected by a competitive application process administered by ALDOT ;
8. Independent landscaping projects are not eligible;
9. Transportation museums are not eligible;
10. For cities/towns located within the six (6) largest MPO's (Birmingham, Huntsville, Montgomery, Mobile, Columbus, GA, and Pensacola, FL), the TAP funds that are being administered by ALDOT are completely separate from the TAP funds that are dedicated to the aforementioned MPO's.

Please contact Bob Kratzer at (334) 353-6442 if you have questions regarding this matter.

### **FHWA Offers New Funding for Innovative Demonstration Projects**

New funding is available from the Federal Highway Administration's Accelerated Innovation Deployment Demonstration program to encourage the transportation community to adopt proven innovations. [Funding](#) or the AID Demonstration program, launched in 2014 as part of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, was continued by the 2015 [Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act](#). Since AID Demonstration was introduced, FHWA has provided more than \$43 million for 61 awards.

Under the program, funding of up to \$1 million may be awarded for projects that use proven innovations in any project phase,

including planning, financing, operation, structures, materials, pavements, environment and construction. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis through Grants.gov, the federal government's website for information on funding opportunities. For more information on the AID Demonstration program, contact [Ewa Flom](#) of the FHWA Center for Accelerating Innovation

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### The Big Jump Project

[The Big Jump Project](#) applications Due: *October 28, 2016*

Building on the momentum of the Green Lane Project, The Big Jump will put bikes at the center of connecting people to the places where they live, learn, work and play. Through a mix of on-the-ground infrastructure, smart outreach and community engagement, The Big Jump will partner with community leaders in the U.S. to identify opportunities for improvements specifically tailored to each community's needs. The Big Jump Project is a three-year effort to help 10 places achieve a big jump in biking – a doubling or tripling of people riding – by building a network of safe and comfortable places to ride and engaging the community. The goal is also to validate a core concept: that if a city does all the right things, more people will ride and the community will be a better place to live, work and play. The Big Jump team is looking for 10 places that will achieve great things for biking between now and 2020.

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### Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs

Deadline: Rolling

Grants made under these programs will leverage regional assets to support the implementation of regional economic development strategies designed to create jobs, leverage private capital, encourage economic development, and strengthen America's ability to compete in the global marketplace. Through the Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO), the Economic Development Administration (EDA) solicits applications from rural and urban communities to develop initiatives that advance new ideas and creative approaches to address rapidly evolving economic conditions. EDA is employing a new two-phase review process for proposals/applications submitted under this FFO. Proposals will be reviewed by EDA within 30 days of receipt; and following the proposal review, full applications will be reviewed within 60 days of receipt.

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### Industrial Access Road and Bridge

Industrial access funds are intended to provide adequate public access to new or expanding distribution, manufacturing and industrial firms. The industry must be committed to new investment and the creation of new jobs. The new access must be on public right of way for public use (state, city or county) and the project sponsor (city or county) must maintain the completed facility unless the facility consists of turn lanes, crossovers, etc., that are located on state highways. Industrial access funds are limited to construction, construction engineering and inspection costs. The project sponsor is responsible for all preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition and utility relocation costs.

Prior to the date the qualifying (new or expanding) project is "placed in service," the sponsoring entity or its local development agency must notify the Alabama Department of Commerce of its intent to claim the incentives under Section 41-9-202.1, Code of Alabama 1975. Effective October 9, 2008, the Industrial Access Road and Bridge Corporation application submittal should include the notification acknowledgment letter from the Secretary of Commerce. For more info, see [HERE](#)

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## Just For Fun

This week's Just For Fun has nothing to do with Transportation... *Just For Fun*. It is the Major League Baseball Post Season, and the World Series is a couple of weeks away. Because none of my teams have made the playoffs, *and no one is playing against the Yankees*, I have no one to cheer for, until now. Loretta Dolan is 102 years old and has been keeping score the Cubs Games since 1963. It is an awesome story about an awesome person with an unawesome passion. For her, I'll be rooting for the Cubs, *Just For Fun*. [HERE](#)



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## In the News

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**Recent spectacular I-10 traffic accidents highlight slow move toward fix for Coastal Alabama**



By John Sharp | [jsharp@al.com](mailto:jsharp@al.com)

Email the author | [Follow on Twitter](#)

on October 13, 2016 at 6:20 AM, updated October 13, 2016 at 8:04 AM

An 18-wheeler carrying milk cartons swerved to avoid slamming into other vehicles on Saturday, plunged over the edge of Interstate 10 and [crashed into the waters of the Mobile Bay](#).

Two days later, eastbound I-10 connecting Mobile and Baldwin counties was at a standstill following a Monday morning multi-vehicle crash. Dramatic pictures of a pick-up truck dangling over the edge of the Bayway were shared throughout social media.



Borden's milk truck crashed into the Mobile Bay on Saturday, Oct. 8, 2016, in Mobile, Ala. The driver of the crashed truck survived. (file photo)

And days before, evacuees fleeing the East Coast as Hurricane Matthew approached the U.S. found themselves stuck on I-10.

"Every time we have a weekend like last weekend, you wouldn't believe the number of phone calls we get from people who think we can do something about it," said Mike Lee, chairman of the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce's "Build the Bridge" coalition. "They laugh and say 'you're the only ones we think about.'"

#### 'Safety risk'

The latest traffic headaches along the I-10 Bayway – a four-lane 7-1/2-mile viaduct bridge carrying I-10 traffic from the George Wallace Tunnel in downtown Mobile to Spanish Fort in Baldwin County – highlight what officials throughout the region are pushing: A massive overhaul to the connection, [anchored with a new bridge at a cost of about \\$850 million](#).

"The recent accidents just further underscore the big issue here," said U.S. Rep. Bradley Byrne, R-Fairhope, and a leading proponent of the I-10 Mobile River Bridge project. "And I want to be clear, this is more than just an inconvenience for people. This is a real safety issue that puts lives at risk."

Though the recent crashes on the Bayway are nowhere near the worst – that one occurred in 1995, a massive 200-vehicle crash that ranks among the worst multi-vehicle crashes in the nation – they do illustrate why transportation officials plan to increase the public spotlight on a project expected to be among the most expensive in Alabama history.

The Alabama Department of Transportation is inching toward the completion of the project's final environmental impact statement, which will provide a firm cost estimate. The final report is due in the first quarter of next year. Continue [HERE](#)

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### Map For Mobile

Mayor Stimpson shared a quick video of all the future "corridors" envisioned by the Map for Mobile with renderings. The vision includes Urban Corridor, Traditional Corridor with a Traditional Center, a Suburban Corridor with Suburban Center and an Edge Corridor. <https://www.facebook.com/SandyStimpsonMobile/videos/1209361305787716/>

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### Work on beach road in Orange Beach starts Oct. 17

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Posted Tuesday, October 11, 2016 2:45 pm



ORANGE BEACH, AL – The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) will begin the first phase of the SR 182 Median Improvements and Beautification project in Orange Beach from West Loop Road to the Cotton Bayou Beach Access on Monday, Oct. 17.

The project scope will include removing the center turn lane from the existing roadway and installing raised landscaped medians; implementing signalized median U-turns to reduce the number of intersection conflict points; creating designated pedestrian crosswalks at signalized intersections; and widening, restriping and resurfacing the one-mile corridor.

Landscaping of the medians will begin after the project is completed, which is scheduled for summer 2017, and will be performed by the City of Orange Beach.

Work will be restricted to the overnight hours of 9 p.m. to 9 a.m. Sunday through Thursday beginning March 5 through April 15, and will resume after May 25, to accommodate spring break and peak travel seasons.

For project updates, including lane closures, please visit [www.SR182.com](http://www.SR182.com) and follow the @ALDOTMobileArea Twitter account.

The \$3.3 million contract was awarded to John G. Walton Construction from Mobile.

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## Hundreds of laws at stake with Amendment 14 on Alabama ballot

By [Mike Cason | \[mecason@al.com\]\(mailto:mecason@al.com\)](mailto:mecason@al.com)

Voters statewide will decide the fates of 14 proposed amendments to the Alabama Constitution on Nov. 8. The topics range widely – from protecting money for state parks to expanding the Auburn University board of trustees. A few affect only one county. Voters might find some of the amendments confusing unless they do some homework before heading to the polls. An example is Amendment 14, which officials say is needed to save hundreds of local laws from legal jeopardy. "All 67 counties would have something at stake should this go down," Sen. Cam Ward, R-Alabaster, said. The issue goes back to another amendment added to the state Constitution in 1984. Amendment 448 requires legislators to pass the state budgets before other bills. The budgets are long, detailed documents that need lots of fine-tuning, so lawmakers circumvent the mandate to approve them first. To do that, they pass a "budget isolation resolution" for each bill they consider before the budgets, which is allowed under Amendment 448. The so-called BIR vote is ingrained in the legislative routine.

In December, a court ruled that a Jefferson County sales tax law was invalid because the BIR vote did not get the required three-fifths vote. Amendment 448 says approval requires three-fifths of a quorum, meaning at least 32 votes in the House. But a House of Representatives rule says approval requires three-fifths of those voting, a lower standard. The Jefferson County sales tax bill passed the House after a 13-3 vote on the BIR. Hundreds of other local bills have become law since the 1980s with BIR approval by fewer than 32 votes in the House. That's because it's customary for House members to abstain on local bills outside their districts. The court ruling invalidating the Jefferson County law is on appeal to the Alabama Supreme Court. Ward said more than 600 local laws would be ripe for lawsuits if the Supreme Court upholds the decision.

That would "pretty much guarantee that any other challenges will sail right through," said Ward, who sponsored the bill to put Amendment 14 on the ballot. Local laws that are potentially at risk affect sales taxes, gasoline taxes, property taxes, court costs, pistol permit fees, Sunday alcohol sales, annexations and dozens of other matters. One example is a Chilton County law passed in 2014 to allow a referendum for a 1-cent sales tax to build a hospital. St. Vincent's Chilton Hospital will have a grand opening on Sept. 30. Amendment 14 would ratify and validate all the bills that have passed under the House BIR rule. Sonny Brasfield, executive director of the Association of County Commissions of Alabama, said Amendment 14 is the logical way to resolve a technicality that jeopardizes established laws needed to deliver government services. Brasfield said it's not practical to think that the Legislature could pass them again. Local bills have to be advertised for four consecutive weeks before passing, and Brasfield said that alone would cost an estimated \$3 to \$4 million. Brasfield said he's worried because there are 13 other amendments before Amendment 14 on the ballot.

"Sometimes voters lose interest," Brasfield said.

Ward said mayors, county commissioners, sheriffs and other local officials have participated in conference calls about the importance of approving Amendment 14. He said they will be the leading the effort to get the word out.

"That's going to be your principal cheerleaders and surrogates out there because they realize what it can do to so many local laws and sources of funding," Ward said.

There is a new resource to help voters understand the proposed amendments. The Legislature passed a bill in 2015 to create the Fair Ballot Commission. The commission writes summaries of constitutional amendments in plain language, easier to digest than the legalistic wording of some amendments. [The summaries](#) are on the Secretary of State's website. Continue [HERE](#)

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## Transportation Research

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### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)'s Office of Freight Management and Operations is hosting its next Quarterly Technical Assistance Webinar for the **National Performance Measures Research Data Set (NPMRDS)** on **Tuesday, November 1, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. (EST)**.

The November webinar will include a brief review of the forthcoming update to the NPMRDS. The webinar also will feature speakers from TRANSCOM discussing methods for using NPMRDS data to evaluate bottleneck locations. This webinar is open to U.S. DOT, State DOT, MPO, academic, and private sector participants – please feel free to distribute the invitation widely.

**To register for this event, please go to:** <https://collaboration.fhwa.dot.gov/dot/fhwa/WC/Lists/Seminars/DispForm.aspx?ID=1088>.

*Please note the registration process for non-U.S. DOT participants:* Those without an '@dot.gov' email address will need to set up an account with the [FHWA External Portal](#) in order to complete the registration process. The registration process may take up to two full business days. The registration form is compatible with Internet Explorer 8, 9, or 10 (using compatibility mode). New users may request an account at <https://collaboration.fhwa.dot.gov/FBA/Membershiprequest.aspx>. If you have any questions about registration, please send an e-mail to [Webconference@dot.gov](mailto:Webconference@dot.gov).

Visit [http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/perf\\_measurement/index.htm](http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/perf_measurement/index.htm) for more information on the data set as well as archived recordings of prior webinars.

Please send any logistical questions to [Andrew.Reovan@dot.gov](mailto:Andrew.Reovan@dot.gov) and any technical questions concerning the data set to [NPMRDSHelp@dot.gov](mailto:NPMRDSHelp@dot.gov), and any questions concerning registration to [Webconference@dot.gov](mailto:Webconference@dot.gov).

Thank you, we look forward to your participation.

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## BTS Releases Geographic Databases for 2016

The U.S. Department of Transportation's [Bureau of Transportation Statistics](#) (BTS) released the 2016 edition of the [National Transportation Atlas Database](#) (NTAD) this week. The NTAD is a compilation of datasets representing the nation's transportation infrastructure, including more than 500,000 miles of roadway, over 600,000 bridges, and in excess of 19,000 airports. This year's NTAD consists of over 60 individual data layers, most of which have been updated within the last year. The NTAD also includes several new features: the U.S. portion of the North American Rail Network, truck parking, and road and airport noise layers. The 2016 NTAD marks the end of the traditional annual update. BTS will now begin using a dynamic publication cycle, making updated data available throughout the year, allowing for more timely delivery to users. Also new this year, NTAD will be available exclusively online. To offer larger and more complex data sets and enhanced functionality, DVDs have been eliminated. The enhanced online NTAD datasets allow for customizable downloads and APIs. They are available as GeoJSON and GeoServices (REST) services and are also available for download as shapefiles, kml and csv files. Contacts: Press: Dave Smallen: (202) 366-5568. For technical information: Dominic Menegus: (202) 366-8717.

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## SAFETY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Office of Safety is pleased to announce the availability of several new resources to help States implement the [Safety Performance Management Measures](#) Final Rule under 23 CFR 490. These resources, available at <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/hsp/spm/>, include:

- **State Serious Injury Conversion Tables:** assist States in reporting serious injuries per the Model Minimum Uniform Crash Criteria (MMUCC) 4th Edition attribute for "Suspected Serious Injury (A)." States that do not currently use the MMUCC 4<sup>th</sup> Edition attribute should use the conversion tables to convert the equivalent data from their State's Motor Vehicle Crash Database. The conversion tables also provide the equivalent definitions for pedestrian and pedalcyclist as defined in the American National Standard Institute (ANSI) D16.1-2007 for States to report the required number of non-motorized serious injuries.
- **Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Safety Performance Measures Fact Sheet:** highlights the requirements specific to MPOs and provides a comparison of MPO and State DOT responsibilities.
- **2018-2019 HSIP Safety Performance Targets Timeline:** provides important dates for the safety performance target process, including coordination, target establishment, reports, and assessment of significant progress.
- **Safety Performance Measures Resources and Support:** provides a list of training opportunities, tools, and capacity-building resources.

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## Pocket Guide to Transportation Statistics

If you need transportation statistics at a moment's notice – for example, if you want to see a list of the most congested urban areas or if you want to find the busiest Amtrak stations – the Bureau of Transportation Statistics has a solution for you.

As we mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S. Department of Transportation, BTS is introducing its most innovative product yet – a smartphone app for the [Pocket Guide to Transportation](#).



[Click Here to continue reading Introducing the Pocket Guide to Transportation App](#)

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## AASHTO Releases Federal Surface Transportation Authorization Portal

AASHTO has developed a portal for information on federal surface transportation authorization. This is a regularly updated resource on MAP-21 reauthorization and implementation of the **Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act**. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

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## Transportation Dictionary

The USDOT released a searchable online dictionary that includes over 9,000 transportation terms and acronyms. The terms were collected from a variety of public and private transportation publications and databases. This dictionary presents over 9,000 terms and acronyms related to transportation. The terms and acronyms were obtained from various transportation publications and databases which exist within the federal government, private organizations, Canada and Mexico.

### Search Tips

- Sources are listed in parenthesis after the definition.
- None of the searches are case sensitive. Searching for PEDESTRIAN will produce the same results as searching for pedestrian.
- The Dictionary searches for the word, phrase or acronym as it is entered and returns all records that match or contain that word, phrase or acronym. For example, searching for pedestrian will return records for pedestrian and pedestrian walkway.

Click [HERE](#) for the search engine.